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COUNTRY: Germany (West Zone)
TOPIC: Briesen Airfield

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EVALUATION: [REDACTED] PLACE OBTAINED: [REDACTED]

25X1 DATE OF CONTENT: [REDACTED]

DATE OBTAINED: [REDACTED] DATE PREPARED: 5 September 1957

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REMARKS: [REDACTED]

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SOURCE: [REDACTED]

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1. The area and buildings of Briesen airfield were observed between 3 and 18 June 1951. Between 20 and 30 June, the four new barracks installations were being evacuated by the soldiers of the tractor brigade for a future occupation by German laborers. The soldiers were quartered in five large tents located about 1 km north of the barracks installations. Ten tractors and five trucks were parked next to the tents. [REDACTED] were 25X1 seen there. (1) Ten tractors were used for clearing, grading, and rolling the security zones, about 200 meters wide, north and south of the runway. Previously, only three tractors were used. According to several construction laborers, additional German workers were continually employed at the field. The labor office in Maerkisch Buchholz had to draft more laborers.
2. On 30 June, a strip of about 600 meters of the runway was provided with a subgrade about 30 cm deep, consisting of gravel, broken stones and cement. A length of about 500 meters was covered with concrete slabs, 3 x 5 meters. The slabs were slightly smaller on the edge of the runway. A total of 22 such slabs was laid for the entire width of the runway. (2) The spaces between the slabs were not filled. Work on the turning aprons was discontinued as of 18 June. The Soviets ordered that the runway be completed by 10 August 1951. According to the new construction superintendent, this target date could not be met.
3. When Briesen airfield was first being constructed in 1938, mud was taken from Lake Briesen and used for reinforcing the soft soil of the field. It was rumored that the Soviets planned to apply the same procedure and that a firm from Torgau had signed a contract to do this work.
4. According to a construction laborer, work on the taxiways was to start soon. During the period of observation, no work was being done on tank installations, cables, or lighting facilities.
5. Each barracks installation can house 256 men. There are 16 rooms on both sides of each floor. Each room, about 3.5 x 5 meters, can easily hold four double beds.

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6. The surface of the field is soft because the subsoil consists of clay covered with sand and partially mixed with gravel. The terrain was covered with shrubs. An old wooded area is located north of the Brand-Krausnick road. The wooded area south of the road was destroyed by fire in 1945 and replaced by newly planted trees which are only 10 to 15 cm high.
7. Between 1 and 15 July, the tractor brigade still had about 60 men. Ten tractors and five trucks, including a tank truck, were in use as before. According to the new deputy construction superintendent of Bauunion East Firm, about 2,100 German laborers were employed and additional workers were continually being hired.
8. On 14 July, about 1,000 meters of the runway were concreted. (1) The completed subgrade, filled with gravel and broken stones, extended about 50 meters beyond the concrete section of the runway. No work was observed on the turning aprons.
9. Between 2 and 7 July, a Torgau construction firm arrived at the field. The construction laborers laid a narrow-gauge field railway line from the runway toward the north as far as Lake Briesen where the dredging of mud was soon to start. (4)
10. The clearing of a section of the woods for the scheduled taxiway, about 40 to 45 meters wide, was started at the western end of the runway. The tractor brigade worked on the cleared strip with spiked rollers, graders, and smooth rollers. According to the new deputy of the construction superintendent of Bauunion East Firm, the concrete taxiway is to be 15 meters wide and is to be completed by 1 October 1951. Another similar taxiway is intended to be built north of the runway. Construction work was being done on six low brick buildings.
11. According to a type-setter who worked at the field up to 15 June, 4 grab cranes (Greifbagger), 6 to 8 Diesel locomotives, 10 steam locomotives, and 1 concrete mixer were used at the field. About 8 to 10 caterpillar tractors, operated by Russians, plowed the area. On 15 June, one kilometer of the runway, about 80 meters wide, was concreted. (5) An additional 1.5 km was excavated. The subgrade was topped with a 25-cm concrete cover.
12. There were no indications that it was planned to build barrack installations at the field. Excavating for five barracks buildings was being done on the other side of Brand-Krausnick road.

13. The airfield is to be completed by 10 August 1951. The laborers were informed that they would be employed for improvement work at Luckau airfield upon completion of excavating work in Briesen, allegedly in mid-July 1951. (6)

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14. According to [redacted] completed surveying work at the field on 5 July, the runway will be 60 x 3,500 meters and covered with concrete slabs, 35 cm thick. (7) [redacted] The longest axis of the field is allegedly 4.5 km. [redacted] the construction of the runway, aircraft parking sites, and the rerouting of roads will cost 17 million eastmarks.

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[redacted] Comments.

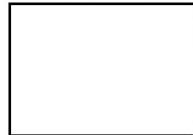
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- (1) [redacted]
- (2) This indicates that the runway is about 65 meters wide.
- (3) This information indicates that about 100 meters of the runway were concreted within two weeks. If work continues at the same rate, the total runway of 2,800 meters will be completed by late-August. Compare with the statement of the construction superintendent in paragraph 2.

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- (4) Lake Driesen is not entered on available maps. It is possibly a marshy area east of Driesen.
- (5) The width reported is probably only estimated. The actual width of the runway is believed to be about 65 meters.
- (6) Other laborers previously reported that they would be engaged in improvement work at Luckau airfield. About 70 laborers were seen working at Luckau airfield in April 1951. No information has been received on large-scale construction at Luckau airfield. [redacted]
- (7) [redacted] that the target date was set for 10 August 1951. [redacted] concordantly stated that the runway will be 2,800 meters long.

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